

FY2021 Buncombe County Early Childhood Grant Report

Organization Name:	Buncombe County Partnership for Children	
Project Name:	Child Care Resources: Professional and Systems	
Reporting Quarter: (Check one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quarter 1 (July 1, 2020 - September 30, 2020)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quarter 2 (October 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quarter 3 (January 1, 2021 - March 31, 2021)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Quarter 4 (April 1, 2021 - June 30, 2021)

Narrative summary of grant related activities

Overall project updates:	<p>During Quarter 4, centers began to move out of Covid emergency operations as teachers who wanted to be vaccinated had the opportunity to do so. As soon as our CCR staff was fully vaccinated, we returned to in-person TA in late April for programs who requested it. The process has been a little uneven, as programs are still suffering from aftereffects of the pandemic, including limited staffing, additional sanitation and health protocols to follow, and, in some cases, lower than typical enrollment due to families wanting to keep children home if they can. However, we were able to begin TA processes with 6 programs focused on supporting teachers and improving classroom practices, particularly around the social-emotional needs of children. As NCRLAP has begun an abbreviated Rating Scales process for programs who were held at a provisional license during the pandemic, we have also been working with several programs in preparation for their Rated License visits in order to assure they will be able to receive a star rating and then be able to accept families with subsidy.</p>
COVID-19 impacts:	<p>COVID-19 continues to impact our field and community, although Quarter 4 has brought the beginnings of a shift back towards normalcy. Programs are still struggling with a dire teacher shortage, as many teachers left the field during COVID due to family responsibilities, health issues, or other reasons, and have yet to return. Many programs are now fully enrolled again in terms of children, though some have had to close classrooms due to a lack of teachers. This creates significant hardship for working families who are in need of childcare. In terms of CCR's response to the current landscape for providers, we are now back to in-person Technical Assistance, and doing our best with TA, training, and Communities of Practice to support teachers and directors in order to avoid burnout and further attrition. We are also sharing information about COVID-related updates, and helping providers navigate through any changes in recommendations and rules coming from the DCDEE.</p>

Activities related to increasing equity, diversity and inclusion:	CCR is continuing, along with BPFC as a whole, to devote time and energy to our Equity Study Group, and to work in small committees on steps we can take to increase equitable policies and procedures within the organization and the field as a whole. CCR rewrote the job description for the Early Childhood Program Consultant position in order to widen the scope of applicants away from the usual white, middle-aged, female candidates who typically apply. We also posted the job in different media outlets than we had previously engaged with. While we have not yet found a suitable candidate for the position, we are committed to the process of redrawing our expectations and requirements to be able to hire someone whose skills and life experience more accurately reflect our workforce, and who can bring to our program different perspectives and viewpoints from the ones with which we are most familiar.
Activities related to increasing operational excellence:	This past year, Covid has changed the way we have thought about meeting the needs of providers. We have made it a priority to build relationships with providers, and better understand the realities of their challenges. Through Communities of Practice and targeted communications, we have been able to form relationships with providers who have not historically engaged with us. This has not only allowed us to offer immediate, Covid-related assistance, but also in some cases to begin work at a deeper level around changing teacher and center-wide practices. Because of the teacher shortage crisis, it has been crucially important to help support existing providers to prevent further attrition through burnout or reduced capacity. We have also continued to expand our training offerings to reflect the challenges providers are facing -- specifically, children with special needs and challenging behaviors -- and to deeply consider the feedback about our trainings in order to better meet the needs of our workforce.

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Progress toward annual goals

Measure	Annual Goal	Actual Results (Enter Data) Please only include new data for the specific quarter				Progress toward Annual Goal
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
# of Reconnect for Resilience Training participants	60	0	0	0	0	0
# of trainings for educators and administrators regarding trauma-sensitive care, resiliency, and special populations	100	25	23	7	6	61
# of people receiving start-up technical assistance, including support for planning, navigating the licensing process, preparing to implement early childhood best practices, orientation to early childhood systems in NC	10	4	2	2	2	10
# of new slots created	20	8	0	0	0	8
# of administrators completing Child Care Business Basics and/or a Community of Practice focused on Child Care Business Practices	15	19	5	3	3	30
# of directors and/or program leaders will receive director-specific technical assistance and/or coaching	10	29	7	3	3	42
# of non-profit board of early childhood programs will participate in workshops focused on local and state early childhood systems	10	0	2	0	0	2

Comments:

Reconnect: Due to a grant from Pisgah Health Foundation, Resources for Resilience offered Reconnect training free of charge to Early Childhood Educators this year. CCR staff collaborated with RFR to conduct outreach and recruit teachers for the training, resulting in 6 Reconnect trainings for ECE providers over the fiscal year. The numbers are not listed in the outcomes because we did not host the training. We were able to use these funds to provide additional trainings in similar topics free of charge for early educators. Training: Multiple trainings were offered in topic areas, however as the pandemic continued, enrollment dropped significantly in Q3&Q4. New slots: The pandemic resulted in a staffing crisis for Early Childhood. Many programs closed classrooms or are operating with lower enrollment, adding barriers to already challenging slot creation. We are hopeful that more programs will open or be able to expand as the pandemic wanes and more staff are available. Communication with boards was limited this year due to many nonprofits not convening through the pandemic or not seeking training regarding the early childhood system for their board during this time.

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Use of funds to date and any budget considerations

Spending Category	Starting Budget	Total Spending (Enter Data)				Amount Remaining
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Personnel	\$ 93,000	18,820.70	21,381.32	18,249.98	\$ 32,938	\$ 1,610
Travel/Training	\$ 4,700	223.18	111.77	450.00	\$ 2,159	\$ 1,756
Technology	\$ 5,000	-	115.76	-	\$ 2,938	\$ 1,946
Curriculum/Assessments						\$ -
Licensing/Dues						\$ -
Nutrition						\$ -
Transportation						\$ -
Supplies/Materials	\$ 11,234	32.87	4,157.74	1,359.05	\$ 6,578	\$ (893)
Building Maintenance/Repair	\$ 2,460	202.62	423.25	246.45	\$ 503	\$ 1,085
Rent/Occupancy/Utilities	\$ 28,476	6,526.27	6,474.38	6,668.22	\$ 7,245	\$ 1,562
Furniture						\$ -
Playground/Outdoor space						\$ -
Printing/Marketing/Website/Postage	\$ 2,000	-	21.42	-		\$ 1,979
Admin Expenses (Legal, Accounting, Insurance,	\$ 850	-	111.18		\$ 3	\$ 736
Other (please list)	\$ 5,280	187.50	-	1,191.00	\$ 13,681	\$ (9,780)
Total	\$ 153,000	25,993.14	32,796.82	28,164.70	\$ 66,045	\$ -

Comments:

Note: Reconnect for Resilience planned for Q4 as well as other training opportunities which account for slower spending in supplies/materials, technology, and "other" line items in Q1-Q3